“AMIT LODHA’S LITERARY TEXTS AND THEIR REPRESENTATION IN MASS MEDIA: A CASE STUDY IN CONTEMPARARY INDIAN POPULAR CULTURE”

Synopsis Submitted to the
Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded, Maharashtra, India

स्वामी रामानंद तीर्थ मराठवाडा विद्यापीठ, नांदेड.

For Registration to the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
ENGLISH
Under the Faculty of Humanities

Researcher

Mr. Ajit Balajirao Lanjile
Mahatma Gandhi Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedpur
Dist. Latur (M.S.), India

Research Supervisor

Dr. M. M. Nivargi
Professor, Dept. of English,
Mahatma Gandhi Mahavidyalaya, Ahmedpur
Dist. Latur (M.S.), India

Year : 2023

Synopsis for the Proposed Research (Ph.D.)

Title of the proposed thesis:

"AMIT LODHA'S LITERARY TEXTS AND THEIR REPRESENTATION IN MASS MEDIA: A CASE STUDY IN CONTEMPARARY INDIAN POPULAR CULTURE"

Introduction:

In present times, Indian popular culture has been enriched with diversity of inputs. These include the printed and electronic books, movies, web serials, social media texts, television programmes etc. Indian book market has been flooded with popular fiction and non-fiction texts. The proposed research is a case study of literary texts *Bihar Diaries* and *Life in the Uniform* and their representation in the Netflix web series *"Khakee: The Bihar Chapter".*

In all its forms, fiction, non-fiction and web-serial Lodha's texts became tremendously popular. This is one of the examples of popular literary productions and its representation across the media. This phenomenon is notably visible in the 21st century Indian popular culture. For example, *A Married Woman*, a web-series based on Manju Kapur's novel *A Married Woman*. *Samantar* is a novel by Suhas Shirwalkar which is also adapted as a popular Marathi serial. Several such examples can be seen where the literary text is adapted for mass media shows. Notable texts include *Sacred Games* a novel by Vikram Chandra reproduced as a web-series, a popular text *Black Tornado* became a well-received web-series as *State of Siege: 26/11*. Chetan Bhagat can be seen as the most successful popular writer whose novels have been adapted as movies. *Wise and Otherwise* is a non-fiction book of Sudha Murti which also has been adapted for mass media.

Popular culture is also called 'Mass culture' or 'Pop culture'. It is evident in the form of literature, movies, music, television, video games, sports, entertainment news, fashion and various forms of social media. Popular culture has been seen as a specific impact of

industrialization and urbanization.

The Indian Popular culture has been heavily influenced by movies, tele serials, advertisements etc. in India. This is a culture of everyday life reflected in the form of new fashion, new ways of spending the pastime, new lingo, and changing food habits. The Pop culture or Mass culture is generally defined as "the set of practices, beliefs and objects that embody the most broadly shared meaning of a social system." It is the accumulation of attitudes, ideas, trends, fads, icons, symbols (etc.) that embodies the culture of a large mass of people at a point of time. John Storey, a prominent Culture critic views it as "the culture that is left over, after we have decided what is high culture".

The significance of Popular culture and literature in the postmodern era:

Popular cultures play very important role in the postmodern critical theories. Renowned critic Angela McRobbie researched on popular culture and she explained that popular culture has paved way for postmodernism. She explained how media changed their role on that time. Mass media, a component of popular culture, played very important role in the theoretical concept of Postmodernism. The theories of Popular culture replaced attention from singular gaze of the semiologists to a multiplicity of fragmented frequently interrupted looks.

Contemporary Indian English Popular Literature

Contemporary Indian Literature has 'Popular Literature' as an integral part. The readership of popular books has been on the rise. The popular literary tradition includes books categorized into several genres such as 'self-help', 'horror', crime', 'war novels', 'crime novels', 'chick lit', 'non-fiction' (biographies, autobiographies, memoires, anecdotal collections). Indian writers like Navoneel Chakraborty, Jaggi Bhasin, Mukul Deva, Ashwin Sanghi, Ashok Banker wrote thriller novel and became bestselling writers.

In this scenario Amit Lodha is counted among one of the most popular contemporary Indian

English writers.

Review of Literature

Several comprehensive studies have been carried out in the field of Popular culture and literature in India recently. Some of the notable examples are as follows:

1)*Popular Culture in a Globalised India*, Edited By K. Moti Gokulsing, Wimal Dissanayake(2009 Routledge)-As India celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of its independence, much praise was lavished on its emergence as a major player on the global stage. Its economic transformation and geopolitical significance as a nuclear power are matched by its globally resonant cultural resources. This book explores India's rich popular culture. Chapters provide illuminating insights into various aspects of the social, cultural, economic and political realities of contemporary globalised India. Structured thematically and drawing on a broad range of academic disciplines, the book deals with critical issues including: Film, television and TV soaps,- Folk theatre, Mahabharata-Ramayana ,myths, performance, ideology and religious nationalism, Music, dance and fashion,- Comics, cartoons, photographs, posters and advertising, Cyberculture and the software industry, Indian feminisms, Sports and tourism, Food culture, Offering comprehensive coverage of the emerging discipline of popular culture in India, this book is essential reading for courses on Indian popular culture and a useful resource for more general courses in the field of cultural studies, media studies, history, literary studies and communication studies.

2) *Of the People: Essays on Indian Popular Culture* (2006 Chronicle Books)- This study envisions Popular culture as a phenomenon of the modern age. We may legitimately identify certain aspects of culture in past eras as "popular", but the popular, in its truest sense, can be said to exist only within the context of contemporary industrial society. This link between modernity and the popular derives from the vast economic, social and technological transformations that took place in the hundred years between the mid-nineteenth and the mid-

twentieth centuries. These changes first originated in the West, but soon spread elsewhere as a consequence of a colonial world order. Of the many developments that would alter the nature of societies, three were of special significance in terms of the making of popular culture. Firstly, the spread of suffrage and of democratic principles meant that popular will and popular taste acquired a value it had lacked before. Where once culture belonged exclusively to the upper classes, now whatever appealed to the masses could also be a claimant to the status of art. Secondly, a series of technological inventions and innovations that included the photograph, the moving pictures, the phonograph, the radio and television, made possible the creation of cultural products that were easily reproduced and transmitted. Insofar as all new artistic production was mass mediated, all "culture" was necessarily inserted into the domain of the popular. Finally, the consolidation of capitalism into its classic form facilitated the crystallization of art and entertainment into exchangeable commodities. Consequently, art could circulate alongside other commodities as part of the vast circuit of consumption that characterizes modern life.

3) *Popular Culture*, Abin Chakraborty and Krishna Sen (Ed.), (2019, Orient Blackswan)- This volume provides an overview of popular culture and examines in particular how it represents, influences and even reinvents Indian society. Each chapter outlines key theoretical insights from various fields of study—such as Marxism, gender, sexuality, postcolonialism, postmodernism—and demonstrates how they may be used to understand the ever-expanding domain of popular culture. Examples from global culture as well as contemporary India have been used to further enrich this survey. Popular Culture has thus been prepared to enable Indian students and scholars to comprehensively analyse diverse forms and representations of popular culture from varying theoretical perspectives.

4) *India's Popular Culture: Iconic Spaces and Fluid Images* by Jyotindra Jain (Editor), (2007 The Marg Foundation)- This volume surveys the production and reception of popular visual

culture in India from historical and contemporary perspectives (especially images from the print-cultures of the mid-19th-mid-20th centuries visual turn that emerged from the new media.

5) Indian Popular Fiction, New Genres, Novel Spaces, Edited By Prem Kumari Srivastava, Mona Sinha (2022 Routledge)- The scholarly essays in this book open up experimental and novel spaces and genres beyond the traditional and the literary world of Indian Popular Fiction as it existed towards the end of the last millennium. They respond to the possibilities opened up by the technology-driven and internet-savvy reading and writing world of today. Contemporaneous and bold, most of the essays resonate with the racy and fast-paced milieu and social media space inhabited by today's youth. Combative in its drift, this book makes possible an attempt to disband hierarchies and dismantle categories that have engulfed the expansive landscape of Indian Popular Fiction for too long. It facilitates discussion on graphic novels, micro fiction, popular-entertainment and political satire on television and celluloid, social media-driven romances existing in the domain of the 'real' rather than that of 'fantasy' and mythological readings against the backdrop of gender and politics. Aimed at facilitating further research by scholars and enthusiasts of Indian Popular Fiction, this book is also an ode to the current trends generated by social and internet media cosmos.

Significance of the proposed research

A number of research works are being carried out on Indian English Popular writers like Amish Tripathi, Chetan Bhagat, Mukul Deva and Sudha Murty. Amit Lodha’s works and its Mass media representation is a noteworthy component of contemporary Indian Popular Culture and Literature. So far, no known studies have been carried out on this author and his texts in the print form as well as its adaptation. The proposed research would be helpful in the overall understanding of Contemporary Indian Popular texts.

Objectives of the proposed study:

1. To undertake a brief critical survey of contemporary (21st century) Indian popular culture with special reference to Amit Lodha's literary writing.
2. To study the elements of popular appeal in Lodha's literary writings.
3. To analyze the process of adaptation in case of Lodha's texts.
4. To observe and critically comment on the present trends in Indian popular literary culture.

Scope and limitations:

The proposed study has three texts as its primary sources.

1. *Bihar diaries* – Fiction.
2. *Life in the Uniform* – Nonfiction.
3. *Khakee: The Bihar Chapter* – Web-series.

A survey of contemporary Indian popular culture, especially as evident in the 21st century will be attempted. Comparison with Global popular culture will be made with a view to locate the similarities and contrast between the larger field and to place the Indian popular culture tradition in this context.

Hypothesis:

Indian popular literary texts and their reproductions across mass media platforms represent the contemporary social reality constituting the mindset of Indian masses towards the complex issues of social inequality, law enforcement, and public governance. The popularity of any text in printed or electronic / cinematic form is a reflection of the Indian public tendency to give priority to select socio-political issues in the post-modern situation.

Research Methodology:

The research will be carried out by the method of library research. Field work is not required. MLA (9th edition) format will be followed. Extensive use of sources across the

internet and digital libraries will be made. Popular culture theories of prominent cities viz. Leslie Fiedler, Keh Gelder and the adaptation the Dry of Linda Hutcheon will be adopted as theoretical framework.

Plan of the Research:

The research work will be divided in the following five chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction: The field of Popular Culture studies.

Chapter 2: Critical analysis of *Bihar Diaries*.

Chapter 3: Critical analysis of *Life in the Uniform*.

Chapter 4: Critical analysis of *Khakee: The Bihar Chapter* the web-series.

Chapter 5: Conclusion.

Select Bibliography

Primary sources:

1. *Khakee: The Bihar Chapter*, Directed by Bhav Dhulia written by Neeraj Pandey 2022 .Netflix, https://www.netflix.com.title.
2. Lodha, Amit, *Bihar diaries*, Penguin Random House India Pvt. Ltd. Publications, 2018.
3. Lodha, Amit, *Life in the Uniform*, Penguin Random House India Pvt. Ltd. Publications, 2021.

Secondary sources:

1. Berger, Arthur Asa. *Popular Culture Genres: Theories and Texts*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1992.
2. Detroit*: Gale Research*, 1982.
3. Englewood, Colo.: *Libraries Unlimited*, 1995.
4. Fowles, Jib. *Advertising and Popular Culture*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1996.
5. Hoffman, Frank W. *American Popular Culture*, 2012.

6. Jenkins, Henry. *Textual Poachers*: *Television Fans and Participatory Culture. New York: Routledge,* 1992.

7. Kellner, Douglas. *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern*. New York: Routledge, 1995.

8. Landrum, Larry N. *American Popular Culture*: A Guide to Information Sources.

9. Saint Paul, Minn.*: Graywolf Press*. 1988.

10. Sanders, Clinton R., ed. *Marginal Conventions*: *Popular Culture, Mass Media, and Social Deviance. Bowling Green, Ohio*: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1990.

11. Sochen, June. *Enduring Values: Women in Popular Culture*. New York: Praeger, 1987.

Web Resources:

1. www.amazon.com

2. www.enotes.com

3. www.godreads.com

4. www.hindustantimes.com

5. www.libraries.rutgers.edu

6. www.quora.com

7. www.thebighrill.org

8. www.thehindu.com

9. www.timesofindia.com

10. www.ukessays.com

11. www.wikipaedia.org

12. www.wordpress.com

13. www.writingcooperative.com

14. www.writersdigest.com

15. www.wrterswrite.co.za

Researcher
Mr. Ajit Balajirao Lanjile
Mahatma Gandhi Mahavidyalaya,
Ahmedpur, Dist. Latur (M.S.), India

Research Supervisor
Dr. Mahesh M. Nivargi
Professor, Dept. of English,
Mahatma Gandhi Mahavidyalaya,
Ahmedpur, Dist. Latur (M.S.), India